Robert Moses was very important to shaping the physical environment (physical environment meaning buildings, highways, parkways, etc.) of New York State during the 20th century.

Died at West Islip, L.I. (Cause of death was heart failure)

(…) whose long list of public offices only begins to hint at his impact on both the city and state of New York.

“Those who can, build. Those who can’t, criticize.” Mr. Moses once said.

Neither an architect, a planner, a lawyer nor even, in the strictest sense, a politician, he changed the face of the state more than anyone who was. Robert Moses was, in every sense of the word, New York’s master builder.

Before him, there was no Triborough Bridge, Jones Beach State Park, Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, West Side Highway or Long Island parkway system or Niagara and St. Lawrence power projects. He built all of these and more.

Before Mr. Moses, New York State had a modest amount of parkland; when he left his position as chief of the state park system, the state had 2,567,256 acres. He built 658 playgrounds in New York City, 416 miles of parkways and 13 bridges.

He was more than just a builder. Although he disdained theories, he was a major theoretical influence on the shape of the American city, because the works he created in New York proved a model for the nation at large.

Disdained: Despise- To dislike intensely…

His “guided hand” made New York, known as a city of mass transit, also the nation's first city for the automobile age. Under Mr. Moses, the metropolitan area came to have more highway miles than Los Angeles does; Moses projects anticipated such later automobile-oriented efforts as the Los Angeles freeway system.

\*But where Los Angeles grew up around its highways, Mr. Moses thrust many of New York's great ribbons of concrete across an older and largely settled urban landscape, altering it drastically. He further changed the landscape with rows of red-brick apartment towers for low- and middle-income residents, asphalt playgrounds and huge sports stadiums. Um… Excuse me?

The Moses vision of New York was less one of neighborhoods and brownstones than one of soaring towers, open parks, highways and beaches - not the sidewalks of New York but the American dream of the open road.

For 44 years, from 1924 until 1968, Mr. Moses constructed public works in the city and state costing - in a recent estimate adjusting currency to 1968 value -$27 billion. Mr. Moses built parks, highways, bridges, playgrounds, housing, tunnels, beaches, zoos, civic centers, exhibition halls and the 1964-65 New York World's Fair.

For all that to happen, he held several appointive offices and once occupied 12 positions simultaneously, including that of New York City Parks Commissioner, head of the State Parks Council, head of the State Power Commission and chairman of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority.